

Dear 2nd District Friends:

Winter 2008

The 2008 60-day Legislative Session is underway as you receive this report. This is my 14th session of proudly representing the people of the 2nd District. My legislative priorities are: **accessible, affordable health care; strengthening the state economy; and improving the state transportation system.**

This session, I have introduced legislation to monitor and report a deadly strain of staph infection (MRSA); and a bill to discipline certain health care professionals who are guilty of negligent or criminal acts.

As Chairman of the House Select Committee on Environmental Health, I am focused on legislation to protect children from toys containing lead and other harmful chemicals; create methods to measure mold exposure in our homes from leaks and poor insulation; and air quality issues; and the how we can reduce, reuse or recycle waste.

I hope to get to talk with many of you about our goals for the 2nd District in a number of **Town Hall Meetings on Feb. 9th**. Please join me to share your views and to hear about efforts we are considering for the betterment of the district and the state of Washington.

To get in touch with me anytime, call my Olympia office at 360-786-1912 or through my e-mail address: campbell.tom@leg.wa.gov Or, you can drop me a line at PO Box 40600, Olympia, WA 98504-0600.

Sincerely,



Representative Tom Campbell

State Representative **Tom Campbell** 2nd Legislative District (R)

Representing citizens of Pierce County, including McKenna, Rainier, Roy, Ft. Lewis, Spanaway, Orting, Graham and the City of Eatonville; and Yelm and Lawrence Lake in Thurston County.



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2008 SESSION OPENER

State Representative
TOM CAMPBELL
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

TOWN HALL
MEETINGS!

Saturday, February 9, 2008

See front cover for details

State Representative **TOM CAMPBELL**



2nd Legislative District



2008 SESSION OPENER

Mark your
calendar:

**TOWN HALL
MEETINGS**

Saturday
February 9, 2008

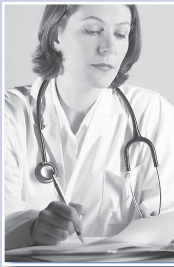
Saturday, February 9, 2008

Orting 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Orting Multi-Purpose Center
202 Washington Ave. S

Graham 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Graham Library
9202 224th St. E

Yelm 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Yelm City Hall
Council Chambers Room
105 Yelm Ave. W

■ Health Care issues are my 2008 session priority



Again this session, my focus is on improving the health care for all our citizens. We had a great victory in 2007 with passage of my bill requiring hospitals to report hospital-acquired infections. It took a grueling three years to reach that goal, but the **Hospital Acquired Infections reporting measure** is now law.

However, the Washington Hospital Association continues to find ways to get around the law. So, this session, I will offer a bill to 'emphatically enforce' the requirements of hospitals to report errors in medical treatment for the public record.

It will require the release of errors logged by individual hospitals and other facilities covered under the law, as well as relevant descriptive information. After an overwhelming public response in newspapers and media across the state, the hospital association has indicated they will now support the measure.

MRSA the 'superbug'

A major health care issue I'm working this short session, (Substitute House Bill 2428), deals with the staph infection known as MRSA (methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus). MRSA, the 'superbug' has become invulnerable to first-line antibiotics. It made headlines last year after a man at Harborview Medical Center died of the staph infection.

MRSA is responsible for more than 94,000 serious infections and nearly 19,000 deaths in the U.S. each year. In Pierce County alone, **we've seen a 476-percent increase in cases of antibiotic-resistant staph infections.** The MRSA-bacteria "superbug," which doesn't respond to penicillin or other antibiotics, is spread by skin-to-skin contact. On the skin, it looks like a boil or a spider bite.

This measure will establish in law a program to prevent the spread of MRSA in health care settings across the state. The bill will require every laboratory to notify the local health jurisdiction of confirmed cases of invasive staph infection and the Dept. of Health to establish a strategy to prevent the spread of multi-drug resistant organisms.

Discipline for errant health-care providers

Last session, the House overwhelmingly passed my bill to give the State Department of Health the legal authority to **discipline health-care providers who deceive, defraud or sexually abuse their patients** and violate other standards-of-care violations. Sadly, the measure died in the Senate.

The bill would require background checks on all providers who seek to obtain a state license to practice. I hope the Senate will respond and pass this important bill quickly this session.

A recent State Audit of the state system of licensing and monitoring health care professionals said the system "is broken."

An Editorial in *The Olympian* a few months ago, said, "It is simply unbelievable that health care professionals are allowed to get a license in Washington



without undergoing the most basic of criminal and civic background checks. It is equally unbelievable that their discipline system is so ineffective... The public has a right every right to demand that legislators correct the problem."

The Editorial added "a bill to that effect was introduced by Rep. Tom

Campbell, R-Roy, (last) year but died before coming to a final vote thanks to strong lobbying efforts by professional organizations such as the Washington Medical Association. This audit shows that Campbell was right!"

Most health care professionals are extremely competent and very professional. But there are people in the field who are not competent or who defraud or abuse their patients. This measure will, among other things, require background checks on any provider who seeks a state license to help ensure that all patients are getting the best and most professional care.

■ Legislature reinstates property tax limit

On Nov. 29, the Legislature held a **'one-day special session'** to reinstate the voter-approved 1-percent cap on property tax limit. Just three weeks earlier, the Supreme Court ruled the initiative unconstitutional.

In enacting this legislation, we resolved the constitutional questions posed by the Supreme Court and protected homeowners in the state from even higher property taxes.

In 2001, citizens of the state passed an initiative that prohibited taxing districts (state, cities, counties, fire districts and library districts) from increasing property tax levies by more than 1 percent a year without voter approval.

With our action in Olympia, we assured state citizens that their will has been restored. I was proud to be one of the sponsors of the legislation which will help all homeowners in our district and across Washington.



■ House passes property tax relief for disabled veterans

The first bill to pass the House this session was my bill (HB 1102) to give property **tax relief to disabled military veterans.** The bill expands the eligibility for property tax exemptions now provided to senior citizens, to veterans with service-related total disability, who have incomes of \$70,000 or less.

It also clarifies in state law that the 'disability income' for veterans from the federal government will no longer be considered as income for veterans who qualify.

Last year, the House unanimously passed this measure, but the Senate failed to act on it. I'm confident this bill will be approved by the Senate this year and signed into law by the governor.

State Representative **TOM CAMPBELL**

2008 SESSION OPENER

■ Environmental Health issues also on agenda

Last session, I was named Chairman of the House Select Committee on Environmental Health. We got off to a fast start in this brand new committee. We passed legislation to establish an in-depth study to reduce air pollution caused by wood-burning stoves; we passed legislation to phase out the use of a toxic flame retardant (PBDEs) used in common household products, including mattresses, televisions and computers; and we established a program at U of W and WSU to study how many pesticides affect our environmental health.



Rep. Tom Campbell Chairs the Select Committee on Environmental Health

On this session's agenda, we will consider legislation ensuring safety of children's toys; air quality issues; address ways to reduce, reuse or recycle waste; and look at eliminating the use of toxic chemicals in and around state buildings and toxic pesticides around our schools.

Another measure I introduced (House Bill 2817) would require **destruction of toxic 'mobile meth labs'** when they are found. Mobile labs are cars that are used to manufacture illegal and very toxic methamphetamine drugs. But, we're finding, these toxic vehicles are later being sold by the owners to innocent victims who have no idea of the toxicity of these used cars.

My bill will require the destruction of every toxic vehicles used to create meth when it is found, so they can never be sold to unsuspecting families.

Another bill on our agenda during this short session would ban plastic grocery bags. It's been estimated that 100 billion plastic bags are discarded each year in our nation's landfills, needlessly harming our environment.



Safe toys are a must!